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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the characteristics of validating and invalidating models of classroom instruction, the characteristics of good teachers, and assessment methods that support validating, therapeutic learning. The academically validating model suggests that: (1) students bring a rich reservoir of experience to the classroom; (2) the past is a source of strength and knowledge; (3) faculty should see themselves as partners in learning with students and employ student-centered, active learning techniques; and (4) learning allows for reflection, multiperspectives, and imperfection. Faculty can help foster a therapeutic learning community by reaching out to students to help them get involved in college. Good teachers need to be accepting, creative, interesting, motivating, open-minded, patient, and thought-provoking. The paper also lists assessment methods that can promote validation and achievement, such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups. (MDM)

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Using Assessment to Identify Effective Teaching Practices

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by

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Fostering A Validating Classroom

ACADEMIC INVALIDATING MODEL

1. Students treated as empty receptacles and/or as incapable of learning.
2. Students expected to disconnect with the past.
3. Faculty assault students with information and/or withhold information
4. Faculty instill doubt and fear in students.
5. Faculty are experts, the sole source of truth and authority.
6. Students are oppressed, silenced and cast in subordinate roles.
7. Faculty focus on abstract thinking.
8. Students are passive.

ACADEMIC VALIDATING MODEL

1. Students bring rich reservoir of experience and are motivated to believe they are capable of learning.
2. The past is a source of strength and knowledge.
3. Faculty share knowledge with students and support students in learning.
4. Faculty structure learning so that students are able to see themselves as powerful learners.
5. Faculty are partners in learning with students.
6. Students are allowed to have a public voice and share their ideas openly.
7. Faculty recognize the importance of experience as a base of knowledge and that out-of-class learning is equally powerful.
8. Faculty employ active learning techniques such as collaborative learning, demonstrations, simulations, field trips etc.

Fostering A Validating Classroom

ACADEMIC INVALIDATING MODEL	ACADEMIC VALIDATING MODEL
9. Evaluation instills fear and is objective and impersonal.	9. Learning standards are designed in collaboration with students and students are allowed to re-do assignments until they master them. Faculty praise success and encourage motivation.
10. Faculty and students remain separated.	10. Faculty meet with students in-and-out-of-class, serve as mentors for students, as well as encouarge and support them.
11. The classroom is fiercely competitive.	11. Students work together in teams and are encouraged to share information.
12. Fear of failure permeates the classroom environment.	12. A climate of success is fostered by faculty and students.
13. Teaching is linear, flowing only from teacher to student.	13. Teachers may be learners; learners may be teachers.
14. Students validated at the end of the term.	14. Students validated early and validation continues throughout college years.
15. The core curriculum is male-centered and Euro-centered.	15. The core curriculum is inclusive of the contributions of women and minorities.
16. Students encouraged to give automated and rote responses.	16. Learning allows for reflection, multi-perspectives and imperfection.

Fostering A Therapeutic Learning Community

INTERPERSONAL INVALIDATING MODEL

1. Students expected to get involved in institutional life on their own.
2. Cliques/exclusive groups are allowed to form.
3. The college climate is perceived as sexist, racist and/or intolerant of certain students.
4. The college climate is cold and insensitive.
5. Students are expected to shed their culture.
6. Few opportunities are available for out-of-class involvement.
7. Students feel stressed, unable to make decisions.
8. Students feel isolated.
9. Students feel unloved and unsupported.

INTERPERSONAL VALIDATING MODEL

1. Faculty and staff actively reach out to students to help them get involved in college.
2. All students considered important and equal. Student organizations and activities are open to all groups.
3. The college promotes pride in cultural, gender and sexual orientation through college sponsored activities and organizations.
4. Faculty and staff are available to students in-and-out of class.
5. Cultural pride is recognized and fostered in- and out-of-class.
6. Faculty and staff meet with students at athletic events, in cafeterias, patio areas, in tutoring centers, in the library, etc.
7. Counselors meet with students, to teach them stress management, decision-making techniques, and college coping skills.
8. Students encouraged to help each other, i.e. providing positive reinforcement, forming friends during orientation, living with and interacting with peers.
9. Events that bring families together with students, such as achievement nights, athletic events, etc., are held throughout the year.

Characteristics of a Good Teacher

Accepting
Adaptable
Animated
Careful listener
Caring
Communicator
Creative
Encourager
Energetic
Exhibits knowledge of content
Facilitator
Flexible
Humorous
Interesting
Learner
Lover of the subject
Motivator
Non-judgemental
Observant
Open-minded
Organized
Passionate
Patient
Personable
Resourceful
Self-controlled
Self-evaluator
Sensitive to student needs
Skilled in the craft of transfering knowledge through the use of numerous methods, techniques, and learning styles
Stimulates student to learn
Strategic planner
Student-oriented
Thought Provoking
Values students

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

CATEGORIES	What To Assess	Methods
1. Invalidating Elements	• Extent to which invalidating elements are present in the classroom	• Observations Student focus groups Surveys
2. Validating Elements	• Extent to which validating elements are present in the classroom	• Observations Student focus groups Surveys
3. Faculty goals for student achievement and personal development	• Extent that clear, specific goals are set and articulated • Appropriateness of goals • Extent that goals reflect high standards	• Faculty and student focus groups
4. Curriculum	• Extent that curriculum accommodates diversity • Extent that curriculum is challenging	• Faculty and student focus groups
5. Assessment practices	• Extent that tests selected fit what is to is to be assessed • Extent that tests are appropriate to diverse students	• Faculty and student focus groups

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

CATEGORIES	What To Assess	Methods
5. Assessment practices	• Extent that instruments capture qualitative and quantitative information • Extent that student evaluation incorporates diverse ways of knowing	• Faculty and student focus groups
6. Teaching practices	• Extent that multiple ways of teaching are present • Extent that active learning is employed • Extent that specific teaching practices impact student learning	• Faculty and student focus groups • Observations • Surveys

OUT-OF-CLASS ASSESSMENT

CATEGORIES	What To Assess	Methods
1. Invalidating Elements	• Extent to which invalidating elements are present	• Observations Student focus groups Surveys
2. Validating Elements	• Extent to which validating elements are present	• Observations Student focus groups Surveys
3. Opportunities for out-of-class faculty and peer interaction	• Extent to which out-of-class opportunities are present • Ways in which interactions occur • Impact of interaction on student development	• Interviews with students • Surveys • Case studies
4. Campus climate	• Extent that climate accommodates diversity • Extent that climate is warm and supportive • Extent that discriminating practices exist	• Student focus group interviews • Observations • Surveys